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Questions relating to information

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Report of the Secretary-General

Summary

The mission of the Department of Public Information is to help fulfil the substantive purposes of the United Nations by strategically communicating its activities and concerns. To do so in the most effective manner and to the widest possible audience, it has been employing every available means at its disposal, including the latest innovations in information and communications technologies. By constantly seeking new ways and means to promote the activities and concerns of the Organization, and by evaluating its work and its products, the Department has demonstrated its commitment to achieving the greatest public impact. As a result, it has been able to enhance public information, a key goal of the Secretary-General's reform proposals. Member States can further strengthen those efforts by renewing their support to the Department and its mandate.

* A/60/150.

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I. Introduction

1. In its resolution 59/126/B of 10 December 2004, the General Assembly requested the Secretary-General to report to the Committee on Information at its twenty-seventh session and to the General Assembly at its sixtieth session on the activities of the Department of Public Information and on the implementation of the recommendations contained in that resolution. Accordingly, the Department introduced five reports of the Secretary-General for consideration by the Committee on Information at its twenty-seventh session, held from 18 April to 3 May 2005 (A/AC.198/2005/2-A/AC.198/2005/6). The deliberations of the Committee on those reports are reflected in its report to the General Assembly (A/60/21).

2. The present report, prepared in response to the above resolution, updates the information already provided to the twenty-seventh session of the Committee on Information.

II. Overview

3. In September 2002, in his reform proposals, "Strengthening of the United Nations: an agenda for further change" (A/57/387), the Secretary-General outlined a series of measures for repositioning the Department of Public Information that launched a comprehensive review and reorientation of the Department. As a result of that process, the Department of Public Information underwent structural changes that led to a new strategic orientation in its work, underpinned by a clear and coherent mission statement, a new operating model and a new organizational structure. The process is now complete and the results have been reported to the Committee on Information (A/AC.198/2005/2).

4. In seeking new strategic directions for its work the Department has adopted a client-oriented approach that brings it and the departments of the Secretariat together as partners. It has also taken further steps to integrate new information and communications technologies at all levels and to ensure greater system-wide coordination that will promote the collective use of vital resources. The Department's emphasis on enhancing its global outreach has strengthened partnerships with civil society and with the public and private sectors. Those changes have been accompanied by a Department-wide emphasis on the evaluation of its activities. An overall review of the changes was provided in the Secretary-General's report, "Continuing reorientation of United Nations activities in the field of public information and communications: a progress report" (A/AC.198/2005/2). A summary of developments in the past six months, divided into the four subprogrammes of the Department, follows.

III. Strategic communications services

A. Thematic communications campaigns

United Nations renewal

5. The Department has continued to work intensively on communicating to the world the process of revitalization and reform of the United Nations envisaged by

the Secretary-General. This is closely linked with preparations for the High-level Plenary Meeting of the General Assembly, to be held in September.

6. For the March launch of the Secretary-General's report, "In larger freedom: towards development, security and human rights for all" (A/59/2005), the Department of Public Information played a key role in planning and carrying out a worldwide communications strategy. That included setting up press briefings and interviews with senior officials, arranging for opinion articles and distributing press materials through United Nations information centres. Print and broadcast media around the world characterized the *In larger freedom* proposals as "bold" (*The Wall Street Journal*, *Newsday* and *Público*), "sweeping" (*Fox News*) and "far-reaching" (*NRC Handelsbad*); most reflected the key messages articulated during the launch. The report was also covered by such major newspapers as *The New York Times*, *The St. Petersburg Times*, *The Guardian*, *The Sunday Telegraph*, *The Financial Times*, *The Independent*, *Der Tagesspiegel*, *The Age* (Australia), *The Nation* (Kenya), *Le Soleil* (Senegal) and *De Morgen* (Belgium).

7. The Department carried out a number of other related activities, including:

- A coordinated follow-up campaign to publicize the Secretary-General's proposals by publishing and widely distributing the book version of the report and its executive summary. The executive summary was translated by United Nations information centres into numerous national languages, including: Armenian, Bahasa, Danish, Dutch, Finnish, German, Greek, Hindi, Icelandic, Italian, Japanese, Malagasy, Norwegian, Polish, Portuguese, Sinhala, Swedish, Turkish and Uzbek.

- Media outreach and press conferences for a number of events held in late June as part of the lead-up to the High-level Plenary Meeting, including the General Assembly hearings with civil society, the High-level Dialogue on Financing for Development, and the high-level segment of the Economic and Social Council.

- A two-day international media seminar held at United Nations Headquarters in late June to familiarize journalists and editorial writers with High-level Plenary Meeting issues. Fifteen participants took part from, among others, *Le Monde*, *Al-Hayat*, *The Times*, *Asahi Shimbun*, *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung*, *Globe and Mail*, *Reforma* (Mexico) and *Russia in Global Affairs*.

8. To promote the development agenda of the High-level Plenary Meeting the Department produced and organized a multisite launch of the *Millennium Development Goals Report 2005* in a reader-friendly format integrating graphs, maps, photographs and text. The report, launched by the Secretary-General in early June in New York, was covered by all major wire services, American Broadcasting Corporation News, the Cable News Network and the British Broadcasting Corporation. It was featured in a two-page spread in *El Pais*. That was followed by regional inter-agency launches in Bangkok, Geneva (Switzerland), Nairobi and Santiago; at the Arab Economic Forum in Beirut and at other national and regional events. The report was distributed to the ministers of development cooperation at a meeting of the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development in Stockholm, and at many events in London in the lead-up to the Group of Eight Summit.

9. The network of United Nations information centres played a key role in promoting the Secretary-General's reform agenda and the Millennium Development Goals. Between January and May 2005 the centres placed articles written by the Secretary-General on his reform proposals in over 200 newspapers worldwide. Special events involving local media and civil society were organized by several centres, including those in Lagos (Nigeria), Lima, Manama, Sydney (Australia) and Tehran, and by United Nations Offices at Almaty (Kazakhstan), Baku and Yerevan.

Review of the Beijing Platform for Action and of the outcome documents of the twenty-third special session

10. The Department completed an intensive promotional campaign for the Review of the implementation of the Beijing Platform for Action and the outcome documents of the twenty-third special session of the General Assembly, entitled "Women 2000: gender equality, development and place for the twenty-first century", and held as part of the forty-ninth session of the Commission on the Status of Women, from 28 February to 11 March 2005. In addition to producing a press kit and promotional materials such as a poster, video and website, the Department of Public Information arranged for press conferences and media outreach at Headquarters and through United Nations information centres. Over 500 media articles appeared as a result. A detailed media analysis showed that although much of the coverage was generated by the political controversies of the meeting, a full 30 per cent was generated by the Department of Public Information's proactive outreach and press materials.

HIV/AIDS

11. Continuing a unique partnership to fight AIDS, the Department organized a major event for the Global Media AIDS Initiative, held at Cannes, France, in April as part of the MIP-TV broadcasters convention. Held in cooperation with the Office of the Secretary-General, Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS and the Kaiser Family Foundation, the event was attended by 57 media participants who agreed to expand their industry's commitment to the fight against HIV/AIDS and also identified the next stage of the Initiative's development with increased membership and a broadened scope.

Human rights

12. The issue of the protection and promotion of human rights continued to be a priority for the Department of Public Information. Multimedia activities on the issue were part of a more strategic communications approach to promote the work of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR), the human rights committees and the special rapporteurs. Major activities included:

- A press kit publicizing the work of the sixty-first session of the Commission on Human Rights produced in English and French.
- A promotional campaign on the Secretary-General's Action 2 Initiative, on promoting and protecting human rights at the country level. At the time of its launch in October 2004 the Department, in close collaboration with the OHCHR, produced a 7-minute video on national reactions to the Action 2 Initiative and created an Internet web page.

- Collaboration with the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization to promote the International Year to Commemorate the Struggle against Slavery and its Abolition in 2004. Activities included an exhibit and a briefing for non-governmental organizations (NGOs).

The question of Palestine

13. The Department, in cooperation with the Foreign Ministry of Egypt, organized the thirteenth annual International Media Seminar on Peace in the Middle East in Cairo on 13 and 14 June 2005. It highlighted the role of international and regional actors in facilitating a comprehensive, just and lasting peace in the Middle East. The meeting was covered extensively by local and regional media, including Egyptian television, Nile satellite television, *Al-Ahram* newspaper, *October Magazine*, *Akhbar Al-Watan* newspaper, *Tribunal* newspaper, and *Nisf El Donia Magazine*. The Department of Public Information's other activities in that area included an updated brochure, as well as the permanent exhibit on *The United Nations and the Question of Palestine*.

Decolonization

14. The Department continued to collaborate with the Department of Political Affairs and the Special Committee of 24 in disseminating information on the work of the Organization in the area of decolonization and the options available to Non-Self-Governing Territories. Its brochures were provided to the Committee's special mission to Bermuda in May/June 2005. The Department deployed a Press Officer and a Radio Officer to cover the Committee's Caribbean Regional Seminar held in Saint Vincent and the Grenadines in May 2005.

B. The needs of the African continent

15. The promotion of Africa as a key United Nations development priority was greatly assisted by the global reach of *Africa Renewal* and *Afrique renouveau*, the Department of Public Information's flagship publications on Africa, and the associated website, www.un.org/AR. *Africa Renewal's* special issue on HIV/AIDS in Africa, "*Silent No More*", now in its third printing, is proving to be an important educational and awareness-raising tool. Multiple copies of the magazine have been requested for re-dissemination by groups as diverse as the Victims of the Genocide (Rwanda); ITF HIV/AIDS Africa Education Project (Uganda); the HIV/AIDS Africa Coordination Team, and Bread for the World (Germany).

16. The Department has also consistently highlighted the activities of the Organization, African Governments and their partners in other countries, by placing feature articles in a number of influential national and regional media in Africa, including *The Herald* (Cameroon), *The Independent* (Ghana), *L'Essor* (Mali), *The Namibian* (Namibia), *Le Républicain* (Niger), *Newswatch* (Nigeria), *The Kenyan Times* (Kenya), *Le Soleil* (Senegal), *The Concord Times* (Sierra Leone) and *Business Day* (South Africa).

17. Those efforts were supplemented by campaigns undertaken throughout the year to promote the work of the Office of the Special Adviser on Africa and the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa. In a month-long campaign undertaken at the end of 2004, the Department promoted progress made by the

United Nations, African Governments and the international community to make the New Partnership for Africa's Development a reality. Developments were reported by numerous major media throughout Africa and by influential international media in other regions, such as *The Hindu* (India), *Xinhua* News Agency and *The Financial Times*. Similarly, the Department's launch of the Economic Commission for Africa's annual economic report was covered by *Inter Press Service*, the *Voice of America*, *United Press International* and the *Associated Press*.

C. The United Nations Communications Group

18. The United Nations Communications Group, created at the initiative of the Department of Public Information in 2002, has evolved into a communications platform for the entire United Nations system of organizations. Forty-seven organizations participated in its fourth annual meeting, held in Geneva on 23 and 24 May 2005, as compared to 36 in 2004, and 32 in 2003.

19. The Group has taken several new steps to further enhance cooperation and coordination among United Nations communicators, including:

- The launch in April 2005 of a media calendar of events: the calendar, updated on a regular basis and currently available to United Nations Communications Group partners through the United Nations system's Extranet, provides information on United Nations meetings and conferences, the launch of important reports, and special events at United Nations Headquarters and locations worldwide.
- A new operating model for the United Nations Communications Group at the country level: that operating model, when fully implemented, will consolidate the communications resources of the United Nations system at the country level and eliminate duplication and/or overlapping.
- Adoption of a business plan for the promotion of the International Year of Sport and Physical Education 2005 for United Nations system-wide implementation.

20. With the launch in March 2005 of UNIFEED, a new way for broadcasters to immediately access the audio-visual material of the Department and agencies, the Department, through its News and Media Division, has brought together United Nations Communications Group members in an unprecedented partnership with international broadcast networks. Through Associated Press Television News, one of the largest television news agencies, the United Nations is now broadcasting 10 minutes of programming, five days a week, to over 500 Associated Press Television News' subscribers. In its first four months UNIFEED was able to distribute nearly 300 stories, many of them from United Nations agencies with limited means. Programming is formatted to fit the broadcasters' needs and includes news features from the field, daily news from United Nations Headquarters, press conferences and briefings, and timely, topical "news of the day" stories.

D. The Department of Public Information and United Nations peace operations

21. The Department of Public Information has continued to work closely with the Department of Peacekeeping Operations to further develop and adjust its global communications strategy in support of United Nations peace operations. Particular emphasis is placed on assisting newly established peacekeeping operations in their efforts to launch effective, well-prepared and properly equipped public information components. Below are some highlights:

- The Department helped train 25 field public information officers — including video and photo experts — in rapid response and peacekeeping planning and doctrine.
- The Department of Public Information worked with the Department of Peacekeeping Operations on the development of a public information module for the Department of Peacekeeping Operations' framework plan on disarmament, demobilization and reintegration programmes. In that context, the Department of Public Information participated in the disarmament, demobilization and reintegration simulation exercise organized by the Department of Peacekeeping Operations from 25 April to 7 May in Brindisi, Italy.
- The Department has devoted considerable efforts in the past year to developing communications strategies, guidance and training for peacekeeping public information components on the issue of sexual exploitation and abuse. Media coverage of the issue is increasingly reflecting the frank and constructive response by the Organization, as well as focusing on other peacekeeping issues.
- The Department of Public Information designed a photo exhibit and an accompanying brochure on the surge in United Nations peacekeeping, displayed in English and French at United Nations Headquarters, the Regional United Nations Information Centre for Western Europe and in a number of peacekeeping missions and United Nations information centres from February to May 2005.
- In May 2005 the Department elaborated a communications strategy for raising the profile of the Secretary-General on Darfur, and loaned a staff member to the United Nations Mission in Sudan to coordinate media coverage. A United Nations radio staff member was loaned to five African peacekeeping missions for special reports.
- On the occasion of the third annual observance of the International Day of United Nations Peacekeepers (29 May), the Department of Public Information issued a press kit, developed a special website, and produced and displayed memorial panels to honour those who lost their lives in 2004 while on United Nations peacekeeping duty. Various public and media events were organized, for example, by the Regional United Nations Information Centre for Western Europe, the United Nations Information Services in Geneva and Vienna and by United Nations information centres in Accra, Asunción, Harare, Manama, Moscow, New Delhi, Tehran and Warsaw, and the United Nations Office in Armenia.

22. The Department of Public Information's work with peace missions led by the Department of Political Affairs has also intensified. It loaned a staff member to the United Nations Political Office for Somalia to develop an information strategy to better highlight the United Nations work and to design a public information component for the expanded United Nations political presence in Somalia. The Department is also engaged with the Department of Political Affairs in contributing to a peacemaking data bank with analysis and recommendations on the use of public communications in reaching peace agreements. In addition, at the request of the Department of Political Affairs, the Department has designed a project on "conflict prevention journalism", to be applied to the training of journalists in vulnerable societies.

Countering terrorism

23. The Department has recently drafted a communications strategy to promote the Secretary-General's approach to counter-terrorism, emphasizing the unacceptability of terrorist methods. The Department of Public Information also provided extended public information support to the newly established Counter-Terrorism Executive Directorate and other counter-terrorism bodies of the Security Council and the Secretariat. As part of the work, the Department of Public Information has compiled a press kit focusing on the establishment and activities of the Directorate. The Department also compiled a guidance note for speakers on the recently adopted International Convention for the Suppression of Acts of Nuclear Terrorism.

E. United Nations information centres

24. One of the priorities identified in the 2002 reform proposals of the Secretary-General was the rationalization of the network of United Nations information centres. A rationalization plan, submitted in 2004 for the consideration of the Committee on Information (A/AC.198/2004/3), generated intense debate among Member States. However, divergent views among Member States and fresh budget cuts led to a re-examination of the plan. Subsequently, the Department submitted a revised plan in early 2005 for the consideration of the Committee at its twenty-seventh session (A/AC.198/2005/3).

25. The initial plan envisaged the merger of nine Western European United Nations information centres into the Regional Information Centre in Brussels and the extension of the regional concept across the network of information centres. The revised plan entails a re-calibration of the earlier plan, seeking to extend more systematically a strategic communications approach to the network of United Nations information centres. Emphasizing a more regional approach to public information work at the country level, it proposes integrated United Nations communications activities on priority thematic issues that resonate with local audiences.

26. The plan, discussed by the Committee on Information at its twenty-seventh session, includes the following proposals:

- Some resource adjustments to be made to the current network of United Nations information centres, including a reallocation of posts where necessary, with a view to strengthening the operations and ensuring optimal use of resources within the current budgetary allocation.

- Certain information centres to be headed by international staff at the D-1 or P-5 level, often supported by a P-4 or P-3 information officer. In others, national information officers will be deployed, as the most senior Department of Public Information staff in that location. Wherever applicable, the conversion of existing information assistant posts to the national information officer level in centres that will no longer be headed by an internationally recruited staff member, would enhance the effectiveness of those offices.

- The centres within a given region or subregion to network together to benefit from each others' relative strengths, maximize limited resources and share best practices, as well as contacts among the media, NGOs and other partners. To aid in that effort, the Department is using information technology to create a Lotus Notes-based platform that will allow information centres to communicate more easily with each other and within regional groups, as well as to better access information, including programme guidance and administrative instructions, provided for them by Headquarters.

27. To discuss the modalities of implementation of the proposed new concept, the Department of Public Information, with funding from the United Nations Foundation, held a strategic communications workshop for the information staff of the United Nations information centres located in sub-Saharan Africa at the United Nations Office in Nairobi from 8 to 10 June 2005. On the basis of the discussions and feedback from the participants, the new operating concept will be further refined in the coming months with a view to proceeding to the implementation stage as soon as practicable. Subject to the availability of extrabudgetary resources, similar workshops will be held for key staff of United Nations information centres in other regions as well.

IV. News services

A. The Office of the Spokesman for the Secretary-General

28. The Office of the Spokesman for the Secretary-General conducts the daily noon briefing and keeps the press, delegations and the public informed, not only of the work of the Secretary-General, but also of developments throughout the United Nations system. During the past year (July 2004 through June 2005), the Spokesman held 243 press briefings. His office also organized 27 press conferences given by the Secretary-General at Headquarters and abroad, 82 press briefings by Member States, 150 press conferences by senior officials and 11 background briefings. In addition, the Office coordinated 101 press encounters and 53 press interviews with the Secretary-General at Headquarters and while travelling.

B. The United Nations website

Multilingualism on the United Nations website

29. Having begun its tenth year in operation in June 2005, the United Nations website has become one of the premier sites in providing a wide range of information in multiple languages to users around the world. At present, on a typical

weekday, users view almost a million pages of material in the six official languages and nearly 10,000 video clips.

30. A key goal of the Department has been to enhance the multilingual capacity of the United Nations website. Since January 2005, the Department's Web Services Section has been responsible for posting an average of 554 new pages per official language, with an average of 2,040 pages updated per language. Major new sites created in the six official languages include those for the World Conference on Disaster Reduction in Kobe, Japan, the twenty-eighth special session of the General Assembly on the commemoration of the sixtieth anniversary of the liberation of the Nazi concentration camps, Beijing +10, the eleventh Crime Congress, and the 2005 Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty Review Conference. Information on the Organization's activities was also available on the Web to local audiences in 27 other languages, thanks to the work of United Nations information centres.

31. Using in-house technical and linguistic expertise, the Department of Public Information has also introduced programming and graphic design as a common service for all official languages. Through the use of Unicode the process has drastically reduced the need to create the underlying programming for each language separately. That has also resulted in a more uniform appearance of web pages in all official languages. A new United Nations radio site has been launched in English and is being made available in the other United Nations official languages. The site-wide search engine for all official languages has been in operation on the United Nations website since September 2004.

Webcasting

32. The Department is making greater use of webcasting as a cost-effective and efficient tool to deliver major United Nations events in real time to audiences around the world. During 2004, the live United Nations webcast was viewed over 3.3 million times, with additional accessing of the archived video library. The e-mail alert system for the daily webcast schedule garnered 2,423 subscribers in 2004. The expansion of webcasting to all official languages is being actively pursued, and the addition of the floor language is being implemented.

C. United Nations News Service

United Nations News Centre

33. With an ever-growing number of audiences around the world turning to the Internet as a vital source of news, the role of the *United Nations News Centre* portal as a focal point for the latest news and related resources on United Nations global activities has continued to gain importance. The effectiveness of thematic news focus pages as an integral feature of the portal was demonstrated in the wake of the tsunami disaster, when a page created immediately after the disaster became a focal point for system-wide news and information on the United Nations response to the tragedy. In another reflection of the portal's growing popularity, Internet searches for terms on United Nations-related issues conducted on Google News, among other search engines, also consistently placed United Nations News Service stories among top search results. At the same time, the e mail news service, currently available in English and French, continued to expand its reach, with the number of subscribers

reaching a combined total of 40,000 in June 2005, representing a 20 per cent increase over the previous six months.

"Ten Stories the World Should Hear More About"

34. Building on the success of last year's inauguration of a new outreach project called "Ten Stories the World Should Hear More About", the Department released a new list of crisis situations and important international challenges that often slip off the radar screen of news organizations around the world. The 2005 list of "Ten Stories", which was launched in connection with World Press Freedom Day on 3 May, spanned a broad range of issues of concern to the international community, from humanitarian emergencies and conflict situations to vital matters related to human rights, development, environment and health. The initiative was carried out in consultation with other United Nations offices, agencies and programmes, and United Nations information centres. Many of the "Ten Stories" have also been covered in the Department's video programming, with footage from the field, and are being disseminated to television broadcasters around the world. The project continues to generate interest from major international media outlets such as the Cable News Network, the British Broadcasting Corporation, the International Herald Tribune and Yahoo, and national and local media in various regions.

Other services to the media

35. The Department continues to provide press release coverage, in English and French, of all open intergovernmental meetings, as well as press briefings and conferences. Coverage has recently been expanded to include adaptations in French of briefings of the spokespersons for the Secretary-General and the President of the General Assembly.

36. The Department also continues to facilitate access by media to coverage of United Nations activities at Headquarters and overseas by providing accreditation, liaison and other services through its Media Accreditation and Liaison Unit. From July 2004 to May 2005 the Department issued 1,998 permanent and 2,903 temporary press accreditations, performed 8,911 liaison assignments and conducted 30 tours for groups of students or professional journalists. It also provided information about, and logistical assistance for 2,066 media stake-outs.

Print products

37. In September 2004 the Department issued a new, revised edition of *Basic Facts About the United Nations*. That completely updated, Internet-friendly edition provides a comprehensive, yet concise overview of the diverse activities of the United Nations system. Currently available in English, the French and Spanish versions are expected later in 2005. A revised edition of the smaller, companion volume, *United Nations in Brief*, will be available in English during the sixtieth session of the General Assembly, with versions in all other official languages to follow.

D. Radio, television and United Nations photo services

Building partnerships

38. In view of the important role radio plays in many parts of the world the Department has continued to strengthen its radio programming and expand its partnerships with international broadcasters. As the broadband and mobile revolutions continue to impact today's society, the Department is exploring ways to offer more varied content from the entire United Nations family, ensuring that the end product, delivered via multiple means and platforms, specifically appeals to the various target audiences. Forging new, and strengthening existing partnerships with major broadcasting entities is key to the success of the task. To that end, the Department has concluded several new partnership agreements, including:

- An agreement with l'Université Radiophonique et Télévisuelle Internationale, an international media organization with 41 member broadcasters in 28 countries. The University will offer United Nations video products through its annual catalogue and through UNIFEED and promote the use of United Nations radio programmes by its members, who can download them through the Internet.
- Novum Nieuws, a Dutch multimedia news agency, with access to over 10 million viewers a day, will offer United Nations radio and video products to clients across Europe.
- Televisão Educativa of Brazil will distribute United Nations video products to stations belonging to the Brazilian Association of Educational and Cultural Public Television and to hundreds of educational and cultural broadcasting companies throughout the country, reaching a total audience of some 38 million.
- Bloomberg Television will provide United Nations public service announcements for its Asia and Latin America feeds, as well as access to UNIFEED.

39. The Department is presently working with the International Federation of Television Archives to preserve and restore the United Nations audio-visual collection, and is considering a partnership with a Federation member, the Institut National de l'Audiovisuel, to distribute United Nations footage more widely. The importance of the United Nations visual archives was recognized by the International Documentary Association, which honoured the Department with its 2004 Preservation and Scholarship Award.

The sixtieth anniversary of the United Nations

40. To cover the sixtieth anniversary of the United Nations the Department is preparing comprehensive video content packages to be made readily available to broadcasters and other outlets. The first package is a 30-minute highlight archival reel of the Organization's activities around the globe over the past six decades — from the founding of the United Nations to its extraordinary efforts in tsunami-devastated regions and current conflict zones. The Department will also prepare footage packages highlighting each of the eight Millennium Development Goals. Examples of the United Nations work towards achieving gender equality, improving

education, eradicating poverty and reducing child mortality rates and HIV/AIDS and other diseases will be available on tape, DVD and through UNIFEED.

41. Russian Radio has launched a project entitled "60 years in 60 minutes", while Chinese Radio, in conjunction with its broadcast partners, ran an essay competition, "The United Nations in my eyes" and the winning essays aired on its programme.

Introducing new technology

42. The Networked Interactive Content Access application, introduced last year to streamline the production and distribution of United Nations photos, has permitted the establishment of a central photograph repository, electronically accessible to all internal users. The application, which offers wider selection, better management, protection of the original quality of the images, faster retrieval and batch distribution of high-resolution images with embedded captions to the Organization's regular client base in news organizations, also means considerable savings in staff time. A photo gallery on the United Nations website, a front-end feature integrated with the interactive system, was launched recently and is regularly updated with new images.

43. The Department has worked closely with the Hewlett-Packard company, enabling the Organization to showcase unique photos documenting the early years of the United Nations. With the help of Hewlett-Packard, the images were retouched and enhanced for best large-format display at a photo exhibit at United Nations Headquarters in July, opened by the Secretary-General to mark the sixtieth anniversary of the United Nations Charter. In another development, the Department has formalized a partnership with World Picture News to further the use and distribution of United Nations photographs. World Picture News stores United Nations photos on its servers and makes them available on a non-exclusive basis to broadcasters and publishers, thereby further publicizing the work of the Organization.

44. The Department continues to work towards the implementation of the "Radioman" module, the desktop publishing and distribution tool for United Nations radio products. Once the system's infrastructure and connectivity issues have been addressed the Radioman system will introduce similar benefits to those evidenced with the implementation of the online Networked Interactive Content Access production and distribution system for United Nations photos.

Evaluating United Nations radio and television products

45. As part of the Department's self-evaluation efforts to ensure the effectiveness of outreach activities, a small survey of United Nations radio and video clients was conducted in November 2004. The pilot survey showed that, overall, the clients contacted had a positive view of United Nations radio and video programmes, rating them highly on their content, timeliness and balance, and in meeting the needs of their audience. The survey also indicated that clients need to be contacted more regularly and proactively to monitor programme distribution and to learn of new developments, new needs and changes in personnel at the partner stations. Building on the pilot survey, a larger scale survey is being conducted in the third quarter of 2005.

V. Library services

A. Steering Committee for the Modernization and Integrated Management of United Nations Libraries

46. The Steering Committee for the Modernization and Integrated Management of United Nations Libraries, which has been leading efforts to coordinate United Nations library services, held three meetings from September 2004 to July 2005. The face-to-face September meeting focused on the development of a strategy for United Nations libraries and information services for the future. A new Subcommittee on Strategic Directions for United Nations Libraries was formally established during the meeting, with the mandate to draft a report on new strategic directions for United Nations libraries.

47. The above report was presented at the March 2005 meeting and endorsed by the Steering Committee, which decided to reorganize its programme of work by focusing on the management of United Nations documentation, information skills and learning, electronic and web resources and knowledge-sharing. The new strategic directions report was also submitted to the Committee on Information at its twenty-seventh session.

B. Dag Hammarskjöld Library

48. The Dag Hammarskjöld Library reorganized its services at the end of 2004 to place greater focus on activities fostering knowledge management. Steps taken in that regard included:

- Capacity-building activities aimed at enhancing the skills and knowledge of Library staff, including presentations made by experts in the library and knowledge management field.
- "Knowledge Bites", a weekly reading and discussion group intended to foster the exchange of ideas among Library staff.
- A collaborative online forum, the Dag Hammarskjöld Library Knowledge Sharing Space, for staff members to exchange views, share documents, discuss issues and plan work. The objective is to improve internal communication within the Library.
- A personal knowledge management programme that incorporates client needs assessment, one-on-one coaching and small team training programmes. Phase one of the programme was completed in June 2005. At the end of June 2005 155 such sessions had been carried out for 11 Secretariat departments and 36 permanent missions.

49. During the past year the Library conducted more than 150 training sessions for some 1,300 trainees, including Secretariat staff and mission personnel. In cooperation with UNITAR, the Dag Hammarskjöld Library and the Library of the United Nations Office at Geneva participated in the production of a CD-ROM training programme on United Nations documentation, due to be released in 2005.

50. The Dag Hammarskjöld Library has continued to expand its services to United Nations depository libraries. As of June 2005 there were 405 active depository

libraries worldwide receiving United Nations documents and publications. The total number of electronic deposit recipients has increased from 127 to 138. Greater availability of United Nations documentation in electronic format through the implementation of a free Official Documents System in December 2004, has caused the Library to look at redefining the relationship between the United Nations and depository libraries.

51. The Dag Hammarskjöld Library web page continues its efforts to expand services in the six official languages within the limits of the resources available. A new page, launched in early January 2005, offers improved online access to library resources (http://www.un.org/depts/dhl/index.html). In May 2005 the Library launched United Nations Pulse, a new information dissemination tool that focuses on just-released United Nations system online information, publications and documents.

52. As a first step in the invigoration of the United Nations internal communications system, the Library has been assigned to coordinate the revamping of the United Nations Intranet, iSeek. A needs assessment consultancy was conducted in April 2005, and a dedicated unit is to be formed in the Knowledge Sharing Section during the third quarter of 2005. A newly designed front-page for iSeek will be launched in September.

53. As part of the events organized to celebrate the sixtieth anniversary of the United Nations, the Library has prepared "Exhibition in a Box" for display by all depository libraries, as well as United Nations information centres, on 24 October. The material included illustrates 12 major activity areas of the Organization and includes posters, publications and information brochures. The "UN60 Outreach Calendar", launched in January, lists events organized to commemorate the anniversary. A web page providing access to the full text of speeches made at major United Nations anniversaries by representatives of Member States was launched on 15 April.

54. The Library has organized several activities, with the support of the Permanent Mission of Sweden to the United Nations, to mark the centenary in 2005 of the birth of former Secretary-General Dag Hammarskjöld. The Dag Hammarskjöld Calendar was distributed in January and a series of five lectures emphasizing the relevance of Dag Hammarskjöld's legacy will take place during the year.

55. The latest volume of the *Yearbook of the United Nations*, No. 57, covering all the major activities of the Organization during 2003, was published in July 2005.

56. The Dag Hammarskjöld Library continues to bring high-quality information resources to official users by purchasing online information services, at considerably reduced prices, for many United Nations system libraries, through the United Nations System Electronic Information Acquisitions Consortium.

VI. Outreach services

A. Non-governmental organizations

57. The Department of Public Information continued to build partnerships with representatives of NGOs through specific weekly briefings, the annual orientation

programme for newly associated NGO representatives, communication workshops, the NGO website and the NGO Resource Centre.

58. The Annual Conference of the Department of Public Information for Non-Governmental Organizations, now in its fifty-eighth year, has emerged as the single most important gathering of NGOs associated with the United Nations. Preparations are under way for the 2005 Annual Conference (7-9 September), which is expected to bring together over 2,500 representatives of NGOs and other civil society partners. The Conference, entitled Our Challenge: Voices for Peace, Partnerships and Renewal, will provide a forum for a dynamic and diverse gathering of civil society representatives in the week preceding the High-level Plenary Meeting of the sixtieth session of the General Assembly. An interactive website for the fifty-eighth Conference has been launched, providing background information and a draft programme. The gathering will be an interactive, activist Conference, inspired by a determination to fully implement the Millennium Development Goals. Throughout the three-day Conference participants will have multiple opportunities to dialogue with a variety of stakeholders to voice their views, expand their networks and interact with representatives of Member States on the eve of the High-level Plenary Meeting of the sixtieth session of the General Assembly.

59. Since December 2004 the Department has associated 17 new NGOs and has disassociated 47 organizations that no longer meet the criteria for association, bringing the total number of NGOs associated with the Department to 1,517 as of June 2005.

B. Educational outreach

UN Chronicle

60. The *UN Chronicle* magazine, published quarterly in the six official languages, and the *UN Chronicle Online*, have further strengthened their targeting of educators and institutions of higher education through the use of thematic clusters that can be used as part of curricula. During the past year, the English online version registered an average of approximately 88,700 page views per month, while the French online version, *Chronique de l'ONU, édition en Ligne*, registered an average of approximately 30,500 page views per month. The UN Chronicle Unit broadcast 15 educational *UN Chronicle E-Alerts* between July 2004 and June 2005, each highlighting a specific theme, such as: safe water; the Department of Public Information's Unlearning Intolerance seminar series; slavery; the International Day of Disabled Persons; and the launch of a series on the work of the General Assembly. They were augmented by some 40 articles from eminent contributors that were redisseminated by the *UN Chronicle Feature Service* through United Nations information centres to newspapers and magazines worldwide. The Department's United Nations Educational Portal contains relevant links to other areas of the Secretariat and bodies of the United Nations system.

The Global Teaching and Learning Project

61. The Global Teaching and Learning Project of the Department completed a new curriculum on racial discrimination; held a side event for the Commission on Sustainable Development on water, sanitation and youth; and launched a new

website on the Millennium Development Goals for youth. It also implemented the Peace Bell initiative, which involved hundreds of schools all over Europe.

"Unlearning Intolerance"

62. The Department's seminar series, "Unlearning Intolerance", launched last year as part of its educational outreach activities, has found strong resonance with the members of the academic community, civil society and interfaith movements. The latest in the series, a seminar entitled "Fanning the flame of tolerance: the role of the media", was held at United Nations Headquarters on 3 May 2005 in the context of the Department's commemoration of World Press Freedom Day. A panel of experts examined the role of journalists and the dangers they face in countering hate media and promoting tolerance.

The sixtieth anniversary of the United Nations

63. The first event in the United Nations sixtieth anniversary discussion series, "Inreach/Outreach", held on 23 June 2005 at United Nations Headquarters, was organized in commemoration of the signing of the United Nations Charter. Panellists in the event entitled "The Charter: a Framework for States, a Promise to Peoples", examined issues relevant to the Charter's values, its history, its present and its future. The "Inreach/Outreach" series reflects the Department's objective to offer a forum where minds within and outside the Organization can meet, and where Member States, the Secretariat and those less immediately involved in the United Nations day-to-day affairs can listen to and be enriched by each other's thoughts.

64. Another event held in the General Assembly Hall on 27 June commemorated the signing of the Charter. Following a reading of the Preamble by a United Nations tour guide with musical accompaniment by the United Nations Singers, the President of the General Assembly and the Secretary-General reaffirmed the commitment to the goals of the Charter and drew attention to the vital tasks ahead.

Special events

65. In its continuing effort to connect with new audiences, the Department organized the first United Nations Documentary Film Festival, "Stories from the field", in May. Held in collaboration with the Media Communications Association and the New School University in New York, the festival contestants and offices of the United Nations and its agencies were asked to submit entries whose themes reflected the Millennium Development Goals. The submissions, which covered a wide range of topics, documented the breadth of United Nations activities around the world. Preparations for the second festival have begun.

The United Nations Works Programme

66. The United Nations Works Programme has leveraged its award-winning television programmes, website features and promotional products to put a human face on the work of the United Nations and reconnect audiences with its core values. Recognizing its value as an educational tool, the *What's Going On?* television series of the United Nations Works Programme was awarded the American Library Association's 2005 award for best videos for young adults. Other innovative United Nations Works products include special website features that focus on personal

stories for the Conferences on Small Island Developing States and Beijing +10. Both sites generated additional press coverage.

Guided tours

67. Attendance at guided tours, which has rebounded to the level that existed prior to 11 September 2001, received an additional boost in June, when a special promotion, funded by a grant of the United Nations Foundation, invited visitors to take free tours on the four Sundays in June in celebration of the sixtieth anniversary of the signing of the United Nations Charter. As many as 8,700 visitors — three times the number normally expected on Sundays in June — took advantage of the special offer.

Exhibits

68. A total of 39 exhibits mounted over the past year have covered a range of issues, including the history of the United Nations, the sixtieth anniversary of the liberation of the Nazi concentration camps in 1945, the sixtieth anniversary of the end of World War II and the founding of the United Nations, examined through the perspective of the United Nations Photo Archives, as well as the Information Telegraph Agency of Russia Photo Archives from Moscow. Other issues included indigenous peoples, refugees, peacekeeping, population and development, poverty, human rights, tolerance, HIV/AIDS, women and the environment. Such exhibits are generally sponsored by a United Nations agency, fund or department and are often mounted in cooperation with NGOs or the private sector, and move to additional venues after their display at Headquarters.

Training programme for journalists from developing countries

69. In September 2005 the Department will again bring a group of journalists from developing countries to New York, for six weeks, to participate in the Reham al-Farra Memorial Journalists' Fellowship Programme. During that period, young media professionals will be provided with a comprehensive overview of the work and activities of the United Nations, through briefings by senior United Nations officials on diverse issues. They will also have the opportunity to cover the High-level Plenary and other meetings of the sixtieth session of the General Assembly. Since the Programme's inception in 1981, more than 350 journalists from 152 countries have benefited from the Fellowship.

Messengers of Peace programme

70. The Messengers of Peace programme has been engaged in a number of projects and missions that have resulted in extensive outreach for the Organization. Five Messengers of Peace (Vijay Amritraj, Anna Cataldi, Michael Douglas, Jane Goodall and Elie Wiesel) have been featured in television and radio public service announcements for the Millennium Development Goals international media campaign. The announcements, extensively aired on Cable News Network, TV5 and Spanish television, have also been made available to a large number of international and national television channels. In 2005 and 2006, Luciano Pavarotti will screen public service announcements during his World Farewell Tour, which will take place in more than 40 cities on four continents. Messengers of Peace have also visited areas affected by the tsunami, toured Afghanistan on behalf of the United Nations

Mine Action Service to raise awareness for the Service's work, and travelled to Croatia to work with the United Nations Development Programme on solutions to the problem of illicit drugs.

Sales and marketing

71. In recognition of the Organization's sixtieth anniversary, the Bookshop has developed an expansive line of souvenir items. Owing in part to the success of the products, revenues for the New York shop are 18 per cent ahead of 2004, while in Geneva, a cooperative venture with the Visitors' Service has lead to a doubling of the number of tourists that visit the Bookshop. The Department has also continued to seek partnerships with external publishers. A significant new development was an agreement with Google to include United Nations publications in its new Google Print programme. That will enable millions of users of Google not only to locate United Nations publications but also to browse the books online and, if they wish, order a copy online. A number of other commercial partnerships were also concluded with online distributors for the distribution of United Nations materials.

VII. A culture of evaluation

72. The three-year collaborative project between the Department of Public Information and the Office of Internal Oversight Services on establishing an internal mechanism for self-evaluation through the Annual Programme Impact Review is now in its final year. A central component of the project has been the Department's effort to establish the systematic measurement of exposure to public information messages. Another important focus is eliciting systematic feedback from the Department of Public Information's diverse audiences. Analyses of those efforts show that the Department's emphasis on results-based management is yielding positive results. Below are a few examples:

- Surveys conducted since 2002 demonstrate that the Department has managed to meet the demands of an average of 80 per cent of its target audiences in terms of usefulness, relevance, and quality of Department of Public Information products, activities, and services;
- A Dag Hammarskjöld Library user survey found that 96 per cent of users found the Library's customized e-mail services, which provide access to electronic resources, to be very useful;
- In response to questionnaires circulated by the Department of Public Information, journalists expressed general satisfaction with the timeliness of the Department's news and media products. A number of journalists requested even earlier delivery of the materials, in order to help them meet the demands of today's 24-hour news cycle. In response, resources have been allocated in areas such as new technology to enhance field connectivity and in production and delivery systems to ensure maximum timeliness with which news products are available to users.

73. The biggest challenge the Department faces is in assessing whether the public information messages promote an informed understanding of, and support for, the substantive purposes of the United Nations. Within the resources available to the Department such information can only be obtained from target audiences that are

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Human resources management

Amendments to the Staff Rules

Report of the Secretary-General

Summary

Consistent with staff regulation 12.3, the present report contains the full text of new rules and amendments to existing rules that the Secretary-General proposes to implement as from 1 January 2006. The report also provides the rationale for those amendments.

The Secretary-General recommends that the General Assembly take note of the amendments to the Staff Rules set out in the annex to the present report.

* A/60/150.

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1. Staff regulation 12.3 provides that the full text of provisional staff rules and amendments should be reported annually to the General Assembly.

2. Unless otherwise indicated, the proposed amendments contained in the annex to the present report will be effective as from 1 January 2006. New or amended text appears in bold.

A. 100 series

3. Rule 105.1, Annual leave, subparagraph (c), is amended to establish a new annual leave cycle from 1 April through 31 March.

4. Rule 106.2, Sick leave, subparagraph (c), is amended to align the cycle used for the recording of sick leave with the new annual leave cycle and to ensure consistency with rule 106.3, as amended, by deleting a reference to paternity leave.

5. Rule 106.3, Maternity leave, is retitled Maternity and paternity leave, and subparagraphs (b) and (e) are amended to reflect the new entitlement to paternity leave, as approved by General Assembly resolution 59/268 of 23 December 2004.

6. Rule 109.10, Last day for pay purposes, subparagraph (a) (i), is amended to ensure consistency with rule 106.3, as amended, by including a reference to paternity leave.

7. Rule 111.2, Appeals, subparagraph (a), is amended to provide that staff wishing to appeal an administrative decision shall submit to the executive head of their department, office, fund or programme a copy of the letter addressed to the Secretary-General requesting a review of the case, as approved by General Assembly resolution 59/283 of 13 April 2005.

B. 200 series

8. Rule 206.3, Sick leave, subparagraph (e), is amended to ensure consistency with rule 206.7, as amended, by deleting a reference to paternity leave.

9. Rule 206.7, Maternity leave, is retitled Maternity and paternity leave, and subparagraphs (b) and (e) are amended to reflect the new entitlement to paternity leave, as approved by General Assembly resolution 59/268.

10. **The Secretary-General recommends that the General Assembly take note of the amendments to the Staff Rules set out in the annex to the present report.**

Annex

Text of amendments to the Staff Rules

A. 100 series

Rule 105.1
Annual leave

(c) Annual leave may be accumulated, provided that not more than twelve weeks of such leave shall be carried forward beyond **1 April** of any year or such other date as the Secretary-General may set for a duty station. However, upon completion of service with a mission (so designated for this purpose by the Secretary-General), any accumulation of annual leave which otherwise would have become subject to forfeiture during the mission service, or within two months thereafter, may be utilized to cover all or part of an authorized period of post-mission leave. Any such leave which is not so utilized within four months following departure from the mission area shall be forfeited.

[Effective 1 April 2005]

Rule 106.2
Sick leave

Uncertified sick leave

(c) A staff member may take uncertified sick leave of not more than three consecutive working days at a time, for up to seven working days in **an annual cycle starting on 1 April of each year**, when incapacitated for the performance of his or her duties by illness or injury. Part or all of this entitlement may be used to attend to family-related emergencies, in which case the limitation of three consecutive working days shall not apply.

[Effective 16 May 2005]

Rule 106.3
Maternity and paternity leave

(b) **Subject to conditions established by the Secretary-General, a staff member shall be entitled to paternity leave in accordance with the following provisions:**

(i) The leave shall be granted for a total period of up to four weeks or, in the case of internationally recruited staff members serving at a non-family duty station, up to eight weeks. In exceptional circumstances, leave shall be granted for a total period of up to eight weeks;

(ii) The leave may be taken either continuously or in separate periods during the year following the birth of the child, provided it is completed during that year;

(iii) The staff member shall receive paternity leave with full pay for the entire duration of his absence.

(e) Annual leave shall accrue during the period of maternity **or paternity** leave.

[Effective 16 May 2005]

Rule 109.10
Last day for pay purposes

(a) When a staff member is separated from service, the date on which entitlement to salary, allowances and benefits shall cease shall be determined according to the following provisions:

(i) On resignation, the date shall be either the date of expiration of the notice period under rule 109.2 or such other date as the Secretary-General accepts. Staff members will be expected to perform their duties during the period of notice of resignation, except when the resignation takes effect upon the completion of maternity **or paternity leave** or following sick or special leave. Annual leave will be granted during the notice of resignation only for brief periods;

[Effective 16 May 2005]

Rule 111.2
Appeals

(a) A staff member wishing to appeal an administrative decision pursuant to staff regulation 11.1 shall, as a first step, address a letter to the Secretary-General requesting that the administrative decision be reviewed; such letter must be sent within two months from the date the staff member received notification of the decision in writing. **The staff member shall submit a copy of the letter to the executive head of his or her department, office, fund or programme.**

B. 200 series

Rule 206.3
Sick leave

(e) Up to seven days of uncertified sick leave in any twelve months of consecutive service may be used as family leave, in order to attend to family-related emergencies, in which case the requirements otherwise applicable for sick leave in excess of three consecutive days shall not apply.

[Effective 16 May 2005]

Rule 206.7
Maternity and paternity leave

(b) Subject to conditions established by the Secretary-General, project personnel shall be entitled to paternity leave in accordance with the following provisions:

(i) The leave shall be granted for a total period of up to four weeks or in the case of individuals serving at a non-family duty station, up to eight weeks. In exceptional circumstances, leave shall be granted for a total period of up to eight weeks;

(ii) The leave may be taken either continuously or in separate periods during the year following the birth of the child, provided it is completed during that year;

(iii) The individual shall receive paternity leave with full pay for the entire duration of his absence.

(e) Annual leave shall accrue during the period of maternity **or paternity** leave.

[Effective 16 May 2005]